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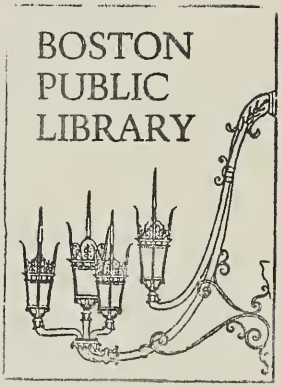
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SURVEY OF ALLSTON-BRIGHTON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL: VACANT LAND AND UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS

DRAFT
For
Discussion Purposes Only

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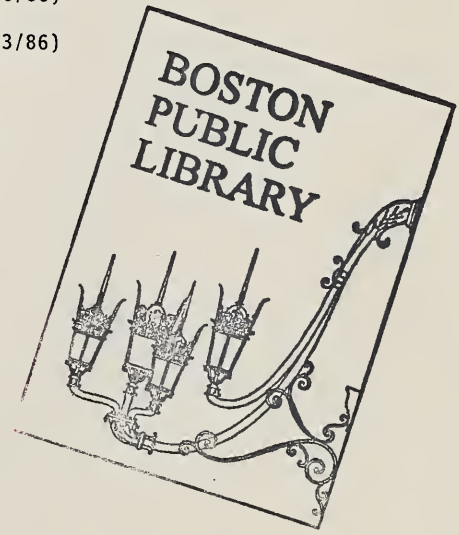
(7/16/86)

(7/23/86)



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INTRODUCTION

As part of the City of Boston's effort to increase the number of housing units in neighborhoods, a survey of vacant lots and abandoned and underutilized buildings, to which additional housing units might be added, was completed in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood. This study presents information on the existing stock of vacant land and underutilized buildings in this neighborhood, and an estimate of the potential number of additional dwelling units that could be added to the existing housing stock. This information is supplemented by data regarding places of dwelling units in Allston-Brighton properties sold since July 1, 1985 and information on rental costs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Vacant Lots

A total of 196 lots were identified as having residential potential in the survey, excluding the area of Allston-Landing and other large properties owned by the Archdiocese of Boston and Boston University. Of the total number of lots, 65 percent were smaller than 5,000 sq. ft., 20 percent were between 5,000 sq. ft. and 10,000 sq. ft., and 15 percent were larger than 10,000 sq. ft. High concentrations of small lots were found in Ward 22, Precincts 1, 2, 4, 6, 9 and 11, and in Ward 21, Precinct 11.

The maximum number of units which can be built on the lots, within the limits of the existing zoning is approximately 600 dwelling units averaging 1,000 gross square feet for each unit. High concentrations of potential dwelling units are in Ward 21, precincts 3, 4, 6, 11, and 13, and Ward 22, precincts 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11 and 13.

Some of the lots used in calculating the residential potential are used today as parking. Others are rocky land, which will require more expensive infrastructure than the average lot in the neighborhood.

Vacant and Underutilized Buildings

A total of 10 buildings, vacant or underutilized, were identified in the survey. Their combined residential potential is 76 dwelling units. The highest concentrations was found in Ward 22, precinct 5.

A-2021

ALLSTON BRIGHTON SURVEY MAP

A-2021

SURVEY OF VACANT LOTS AND UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS

A windshield survey was completed in Allston-Brighton. The survey included the identification of all vacant lots and abandoned or underutilized buildings, as well as adjacent buildings or lots, their uses and their owners. The area surveyed includes the property within a line running as follows: Charles River, Burton Street, Cufflin Street, Chestnut Street, Beacon Street, Cleveland Circle, Corvey Street, Brainerd Road, Warren Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, and Gaffney Street. It covers all of Wards 21 and 22.

For the purpose of the study, only lots with the capacity of residential development potential were sorted. The list includes: infill lots defined as single lot between two existing buildings; single lots adjacent to other single lots; lots with areas larger than 20,000 s.f.; lots surrounded by buildings all around, but with possible direct access to them; others. From the list of lots with residential potential were excluded vacant lots smaller than 1,000 s.f.; vacant lots with inappropriate shapes and sizes for residential use; vacant lots on main commercial streets, within a large commercial area and without mixed residential/commercial uses in its adjacents; vacant lots used as gardens or parking, but within a residential area; lots used by institutions; others.

The vacant lots with residential potential capacity were classified in five categories: see Table 1; chart 1

1st - less than 3,000 sq. ft., but not smaller than 1,000 square feet

2nd - between 3,000 sq.ft. and 5,000 sq. ft.

3rd - between 5,001 sq. ft. and 10,000 sq. ft.

4th - between 10,001 sq. ft. and 20,000 sq. ft.

5th - more than 20,001 sq. ft.

Table 1. Vacant Lots in Allston-Brighton, 1986 by Categories

1st Category	2nd Category	3rd Category	4th Category	5th Category	Total	
57	70	40	20	9	196	No. of lots
29	36	20	10	5	100	Percent

Forty-four vacant lots were identified in Ward 21 and 152 in Ward 22. Large concentrations of vacant lots were in Ward 21, precinct 9 (13 lots) and Ward 22, precincts 1 (13 lots), 2 (18 lots), 4 (32 lots), 6 (23 lots), 9 (14 lots) and 11 (15 lots). See Table 2.

As for underutilized buildings, only 10 such buildings were identified, two in Ward 21 and 8 in Ward 22, see Table 3. The underutilized buildings were identified as such from their exterior appearance: boarded windows and doors; missing windows and doors; abandoned surroundings, yard or access to main door.

CHART 1 VACANT LOTS IN ALLSTON-BRIGHTON, 1986
BY CATEGORIES, IN SQUARE FEET

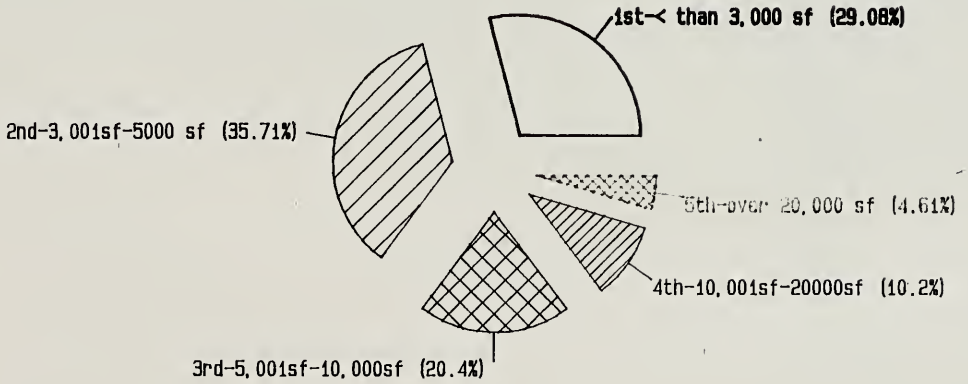


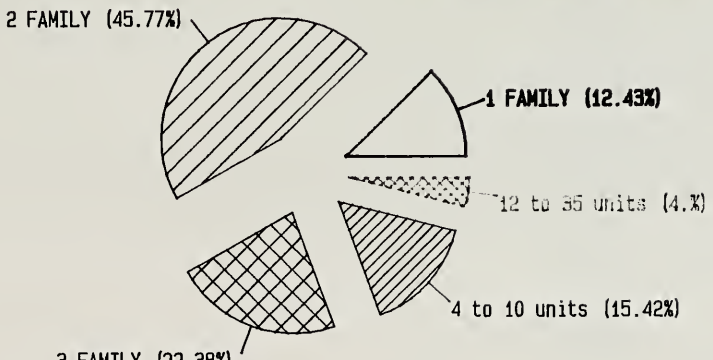
TABLE 2 VACANT LOTS IN ALLSTON BRIGHTON ,1986
by WARD and PRECINCT

WARD 21		WARD 22		TOTAL
PRECINCT	NUMBER of LOTS	PRECINCT	NUMBER of LOTS	NUMBER of LOTS
3	6	1	13	
4	4	2	18	
6	8	3	6	
7	1	4	32	
8	2	5	7	
9	13	6	23	
11	1	7	5	
13	4	8	2	
14	1	9	14	
		10	6	
		11	15	
		12	2	
		13	9	
	44		152	196

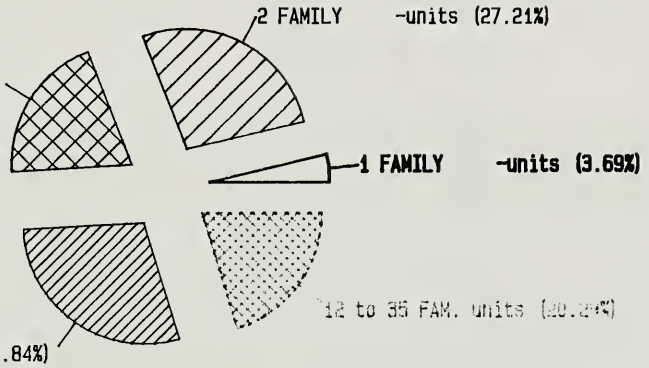
CHART 2

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL IN ALLSTON-BRIGHTON

PROJECTS BY NUMBER OF UNITS



NUMBER OF PROJECTS



NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS

TABLE 3 UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS IN ALLSTON BRIGHTON, 1986
by WARD and PRECINCT

WARD 21		WARD 22		TOTAL
PRECINCT	NUMBER of BUILDINGS	PRECINCT	NUMBER of BUILDINGS	NUMBER of BUILDINGS
4	1	1	2	
11	1	2	1	
		3	2	
		5	2	
		11	1	
	2		8	10

Residential Development Potential in Allston-Brighton

The residential housing potential in Allston-Brighton is based on the results of the survey and excludes large projects in various stages of development. It also excludes large changes in zoning and uses of land, which might increase substantially the potential of dwelling units. The calculation assumed the existing zoning and the use of the adjacent properties, lots or buildings, as main indicators for future residential development. The average size of potential residential unit was calculated as 1,000 g.s.f. unit.

As seen in Table 7, 46 percent of the potential projects are 2-family homes, 22 percent 3-family homes, 12 percent in 1-family homes, 15 percent involved structures of 4-10 units, and 5 percent are 11 units and more. These results indicate that the residential structure potential in Allston-Brighton is almost entirely concentrated in 1- to 3-family homes (80%). The construction of such buildings is hardly influenced by city housing policies. Here the private market and private initiative hold sway.

TABLE 4: RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL ON VACANT LOTS IN ALLSTON BRIGHTON, 1986

WARD 21		WARD 22		TOTAL NUMBER of UNITS
PRECINCT	NUMBER of UNITS	PRECINCT	NUMBER of UNITS	
3	16	1	32	
4	24	2	57	
6	30	3	17	
7	6	4	115	
8	1	5	27	
9	5	6	43	
11	34	7	11	
12	3	8	4	
13	26	9	47	
14	10	10	18	
		11	33	
		12	5	
		13	36	
	155		445	600

TABLE 5 : RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL IN UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS IN ALLSTON-BRIGHTON

WARD 21		WARD 22		TOTAL
Precinct	Number of units	Precinct	Number of units	
4	3	1	4	
11	6	1	4	
		2	3	
		3	2	
		3	10	
		5	3	
		5	35	
		11	6	
	9		67	76

TABLE 6 : TOTAL RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL in ALLSTONBRIGHTON on VACAN LOTS and UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS

TYPE	WARD 21	WARD 22	TOTAL UNITS
VACANT LOTS	145	445	600
UNDERUTILIZED BUILDINGS	9	67	76
TOTAL	154	512	676

TABLE 7 RESIDENTIAL UNIT DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Projected Projects by Number of Units

Type	Number of Projects	Total Number of Units	Percent of Projects
1 fam	25	25	12
2 fam	92	184	46
3 fam	45	135	22
4 units	8	32	
5 units	3	15	
6 units	7	42	
7 units	3	21	
8 units	7	56	
9 units	1	9	15
10 units	2	20	
12 units	3	36	
14 units	1	14	
15 units	1	15	
18 units	1	18	5
19 units	1	19	
35 units	1	35	
TOTAL	201	676	100

TE Because of rounding the figure in Tab.7 - differ slightly from thie. in Chart 2

Allston-Brighton Residential Market

Residential property values have risen sharply in Allston-Brighton over the past few years, consistent with the trend in property sales prices for all of Boston. Table 8 shows the estimated mean sales values in both 1979 and 1985 for one-, two- and three-family homes in Allston-Brighton and the city as a whole, as well as the annualized growth rate for each housing type over the six year period. Comparison to the Consumer Price Index of Housing, which reports the rate of inflation for housing, is also made.

Table 8	Estimated Mean Sales Value 1979 (dollars)	1985	Annualized Growth Rate (percent)
Allston-Brighton			
Single-family	42,117	135,835	21
Two-family	51,328	160,778	21
Three-family	53,816	206,211	25
Boston			
Single-family	33,645	111,760	22
Two-family	32,349	120,819	25
Three-family	27,271	115,633	27

Source: County Comps 1985 Annual Real Estate Report, Plus Report.

Single-family home prices in Allston-Brighton rose at an annualized rate of 21 percent between 1979 and 1985, which was comparable to the city's growth rate of 22 percent, but much higher than the annualized growth rate of 7 percent in the national Consumer Housing Index. Two- and three-family homes grew at annualized rates of 21 and 25 percents, respectively, nearly comparable to the city's growth rates, and well above the Housing Index growth rate.

Rents have also risen rapidly in the city, and increased at an even faster rate in Allston-Brighton. Median gross rent, the monthly rent spent by a household, including heat, natural gas and electricity, for the city was $254 in 1980 and $400 in 1985, an annualized increase of 9 percent. In Allston-Brighton, the median gross rent increased from $291 in 1980 to $530 in 1985, growing at an annualized rate of 13 percent per year during this period. Gross rent figures for 1980 are the amounts reported by the 1980 census, and 1985 data are the results of the Boston Redevelopment Authority and Neighborhood Development and Employment Agency 1985 Household Survey. Both report gross rent for all housing units.

Residents of Boston who have been living in their housing unit for one year or less tend to pay higher gross rents than residents who have occupied the same unit for two or more years. For the entire city, the median gross rent for residents who have lived in the unit for a year or less was $491 in 1985, compared to $316 for residents who have lived in the same unit for two or more years. Similarly, Allston-Brighton residents who have occupied the same unit for one year or less pay a median gross rent of $583, while those who have lived in the same unit for two or more years are spending $382.

Rent for a housing unit generally increases with occupancy turnover, resulting in the difference in rental costs between housing units. Turnover rent is the cost for a newly rented unit. The average gross turnover rent for apartments renting in Allston-Brighton was $600 per month in 1985, compared to $475 for the entire city.

Allston-Brighton has also experienced condominium conversions over the past few years. The median sales price of condos sold in Allston-Brighton during 1985 was $86,665, as reported by County Comps.

The residential market in Allston-Brighton has changed significantly over the past few years, as the above data indicates. Although condominiums have provided ownership opportunities for many, the rise in the level of conversions within Allston-Brighton has decreased the number of rental units available. Rents in Allston-Brighton are among the highest in the city, and residential sales prices are the highest among the neighborhoods not touching downtown Boston.

Feasibility Study

Appendix

1. Ultra List; Allston-Brighton
2. Board of Appeal Inventory; Allston-Brighton
3. Table of Residential Potential Properties in Allston-Brighton
4. Maps of Survey; Allston-Brighton

Ultra-List - (a list of development projects planned under review and underway)

New Development Projects

Planned

Under Review

Underway

Reused Development Projects

Planned

Under Review

Underway

ULTRALIST DEVELOPMENT IN ALLSTON-BRIGHTON, 1986-1988

1986	Address	D.U.
New		
Planned	140-154 North Beacon Street	64
Review	70-72 Franklin Street	5
Review	41-43 Ashford Street	18
Review	114 Allston Street	20
Underway	48-66 Vineland Street	10
Underway	85 Brainerd Street	80
Underway	14-16 Portsmouth Street	8
Reused		
Planning	25 Travis Street/Barrett School	25
Review	1653-1661 Commonwealth Avenue	6
Underway	145-149 Kelton Street	68
Underway	127 Kilsyth Road	6
Total in Dwelling Units		310
Total in Projects		11

1987	Address	D.U.
New		
Review	1933 Commonwealth Avenue	48
Review	41-63 Union Street	17
Review	49-51 Chestnut Hill Avenue	12
Reused		
Review	96 Washington Street	6
Review	36-40 Cummings Road	12
Review	78 Englewood Avenue	5
Review	87 Gordon Street	5
Review	68-72 Euston Road	28
Total in Dwelling Units		133
Total in Projects		8

1988	Address	D.U.
New		
Review	59 Brainerd Road	56
Review	15 North Beacon Street	175
Total in Dwelling Units		231
Total in Projects		2

Sources: Ultralist, Research Department, BRA, May 1986 by M. Johnson

Board of Appeal Inventory 8/85-5/86

Allston-Brighton

11/7/85 30 Chester Street Allston - denial
Erect 2-family dwelling

11/7/85 39-45 Haskell Street Brighton
erect 1-family dwelling - denial

10/24/85 15 Breyton Terrace, Brighton
erect 1-family dwelling + denial

10/1/85 114 Allston Street, Brighton
erect 3½ story, 20 unit apartment building deferral

12/7/85 30 Union Street
Erect 3-family dwelling deferral

12/19/85 68-72 Euston Road/35-37 Colbourne Road
Change occupancy from garage to 28 apartments deferral

3/20/86 78 Englewood Avenue
Change occupancy from one to six-family deferral
dwelling: erect three-story and basement
addition

3/20/86 12 and 16 Peaceable Street	
Change occupancy from one to two-family dwelling; change occupancy to seven apartments; erect two dormer and six deck additions	denial
3/6/86 15 North Beacon Street	
Erect 10-story structure, 175 apartments, five offices	approval
4/17/86 6 Larch Street	
Erect 1-family dwelling	deferral
5/1/86 36 Falkland Street	
Erect 2-family dwelling	denial
4/3/86 43-63R Union Street	
Erect 17 three-story 1-family townhouses structures	approval
2/12/86 7 Rena Street	
Erect 2-family dwelling	approval
1/9/86 54R Falkland Street	
Change occupancy from offices and garage to 1-family dwelling	approval

6/12/86 163-177 Allston Street

Change occupancy from four retail stores to 24 apartments and 4 retail stores — deferral

6/12/86 575R Cambridge Street

Change occupancy from three-car garage to 2-family dwelling — denial

6/12/86 240 Lincoln Street

Erect 24 unit apartment structure — deferral

5/15/86 55-61 Gerrish Street, 44-60 Newton St.

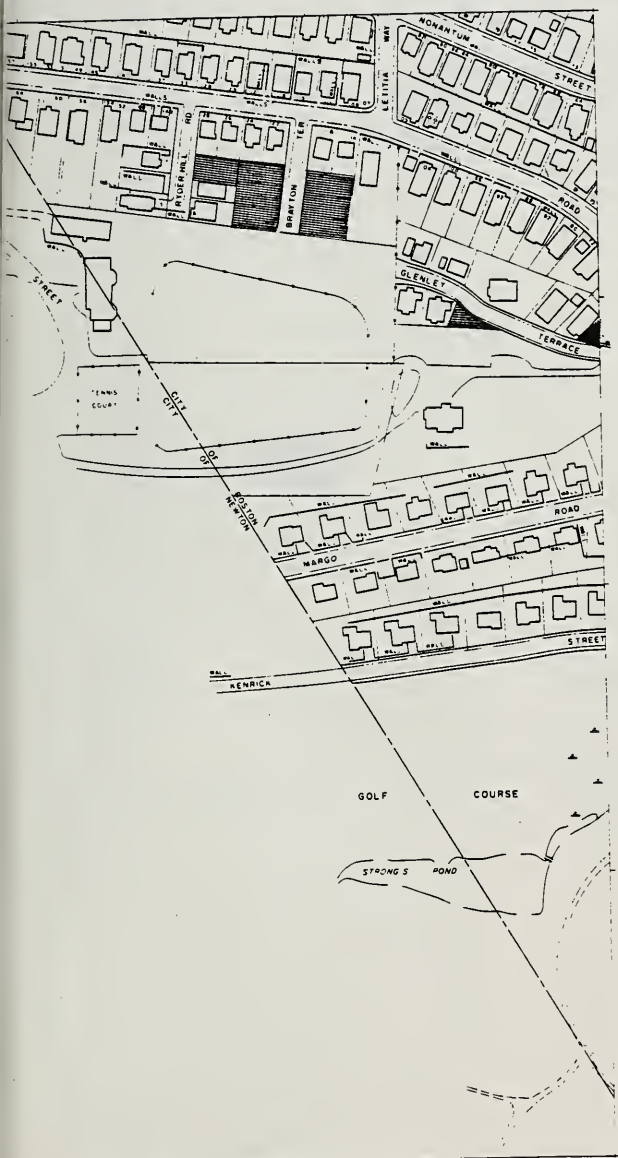
Erect 2 of two-family dwellings, a one-family deferral and an 8 unit apartment structure

Properties with Residential Potential

in Allston-Brighton, 1986

Maps

Underutilized or Vacant Properties in Allston-Brighton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WAY
STREET
LETITIA
ROAD
RIVERVALE
RD
BRAYTON
TER
GLENLEY
TERRACE
STREET
TENNIS
COURT
CITY
OF
NEWTON
BOSTON
ROAD
MARGO
STREET
KENRICK
GOLF
COURSE
STRONG'S
POND

22N2

SHIRE ROAD
LEOGEMERE ROAD
HATHERLY ROAD
ATWOOD ROAD
COLWELL
EMBASSY
AVENUE
ROAD
PORTMAN
LYNDHURST TER
PARK
ROSE GARDEN CIRCLE
CHISWICK
KIRKWOOD
RAGNOR
ROAD
CHESTNUT HILL
STRATHMORE
LOTHIAN ROAD
STREET
SOUTH
W.B.T.A.
RESERVOIR ROAD
AVENUE

22N4

22N4

LAKE SHORE
ROAD
EXTENSION
UNDINE
UNDINE
CITY OF BOSTON
CITY OF NEWTON
ROAD
CALTHA

22N4

GLENMONT
WILLOUGHBY
ROAD
STREET
TRAPELO
ROGERS PARK
ROGERS
POND
FRANCES
ROAD
400

22N4

24N—2E	24N—4E	24N—6E
22N—2E	22N—4E	22N—6E
	20N—4E	

24N—2E	24N—4E	24N—6E
22N—2E	22N—4E	22N—6E
	20N—4E	

CAMBRIDGE
STREET
WASHINGTON
STREET
SHERARD
WAY
SHERARD
AVENUE
SHERARD
ROAD
SHANNON
STREET
VAN KIRK
AVENUE
PLAYGROUND
BLENFORD
ROAD
COLBORNE
ROAD
PARKING
PARKING
PARK
AVENUE

22N4

2

TON
ETRIC SURVEY

22N6

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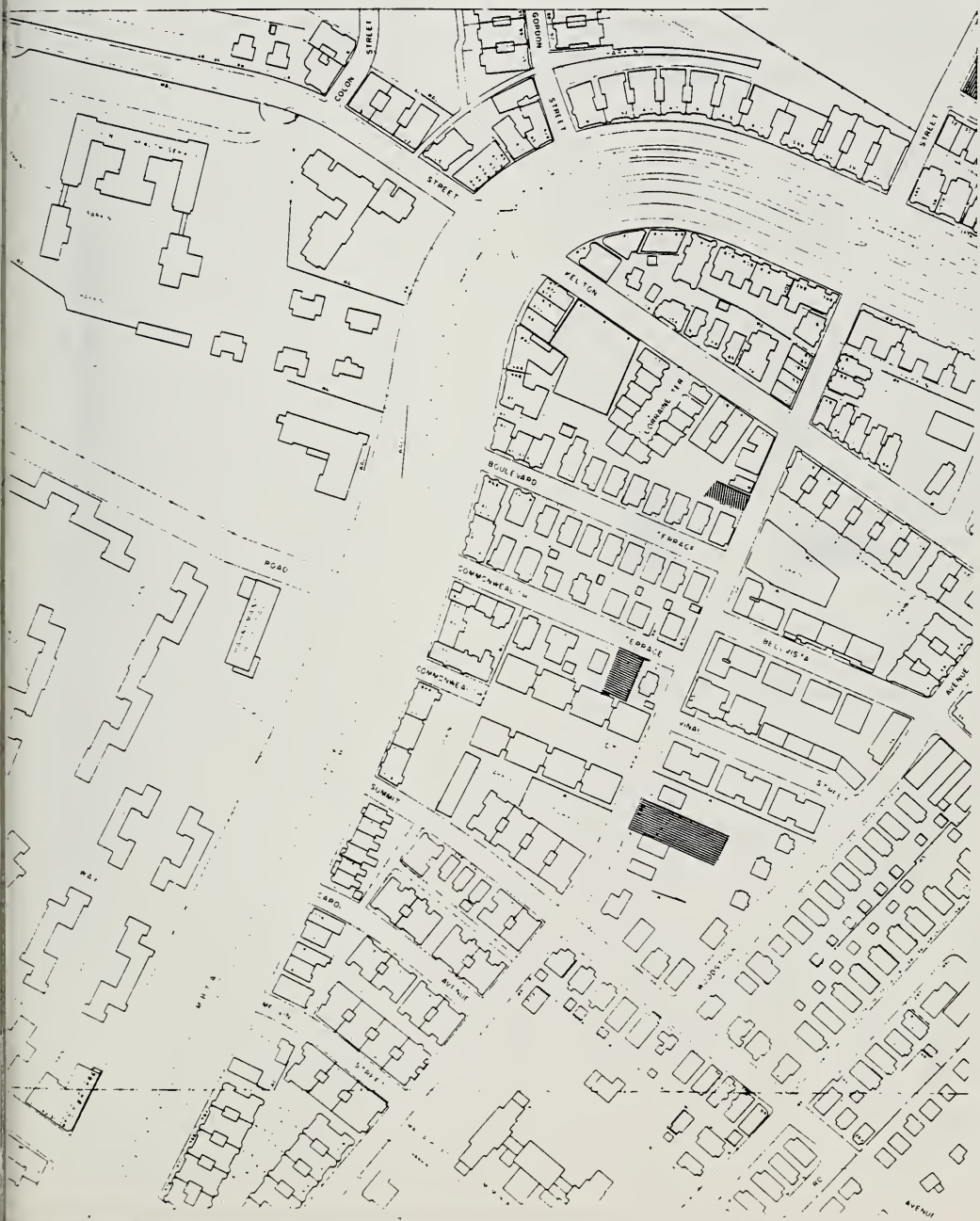

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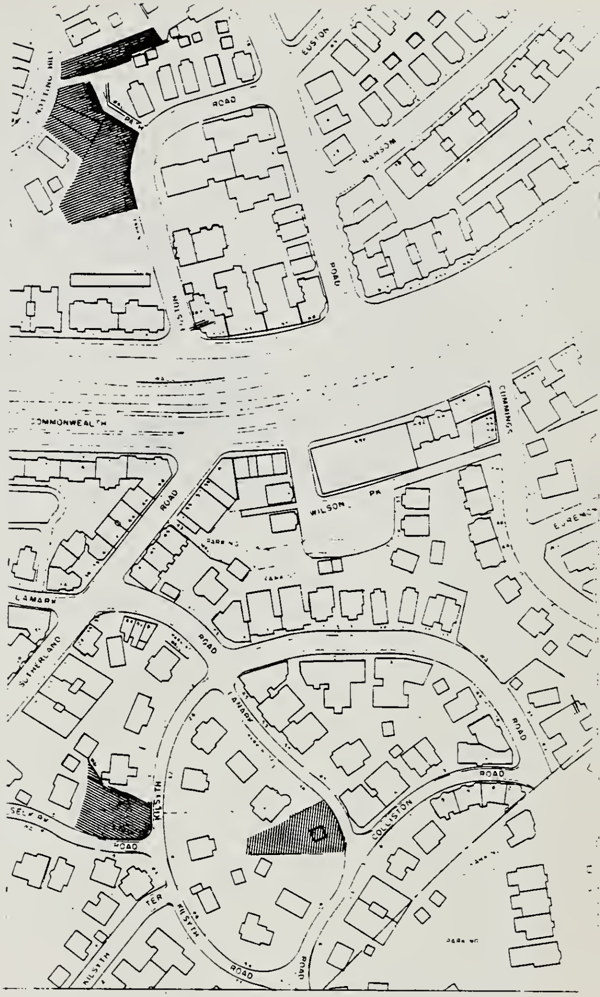
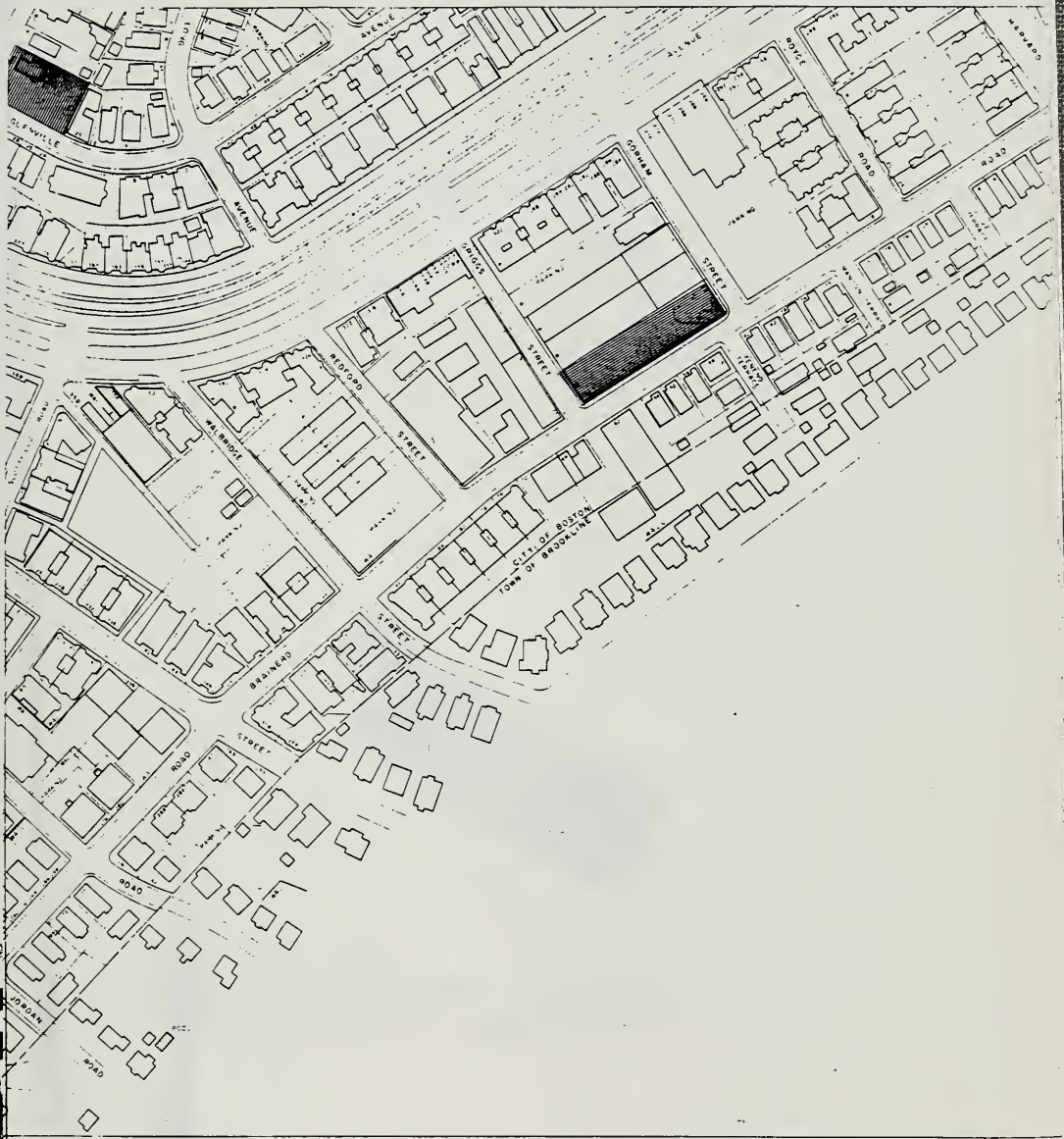

EUSTON
HANSOM
ROAD
COMMONWEALTH
CUMMINGS
WILSON PK
LAMARK
SUTHERLAND
KILSYTH
COLLISTON
TER

22NG

BOSTON

PLANIMETRIC SURVEY



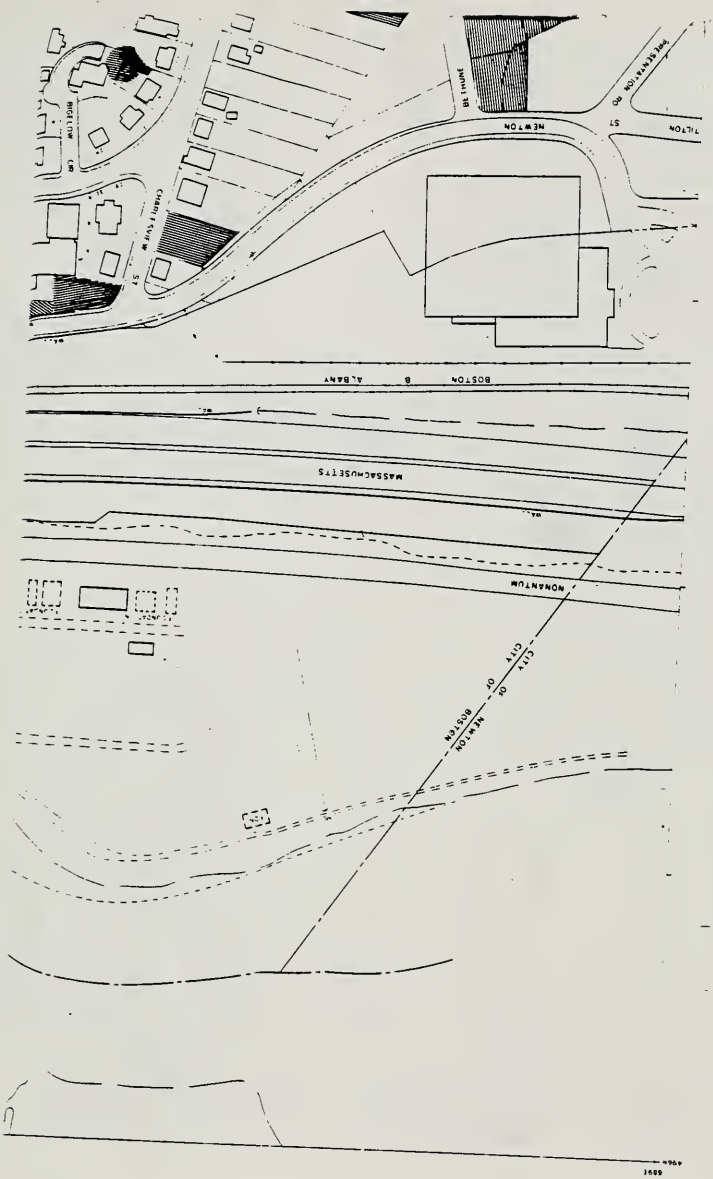
22N6

	24N—2E	24N—4E
	22N—2E	22N—4E

24N2

BELLAMY
STREET
PERTHSHIRE
JUSTIN
ROAD
ATWOOD
AVENUE
WASHINGTON
STREET
CHAMPNEY
BULLOCH
FANEUIL
AUBURN
OAK SQUARE
WASHINGTON
AVENUE
LANGLEY ROAD

2404



20 400 500 FT

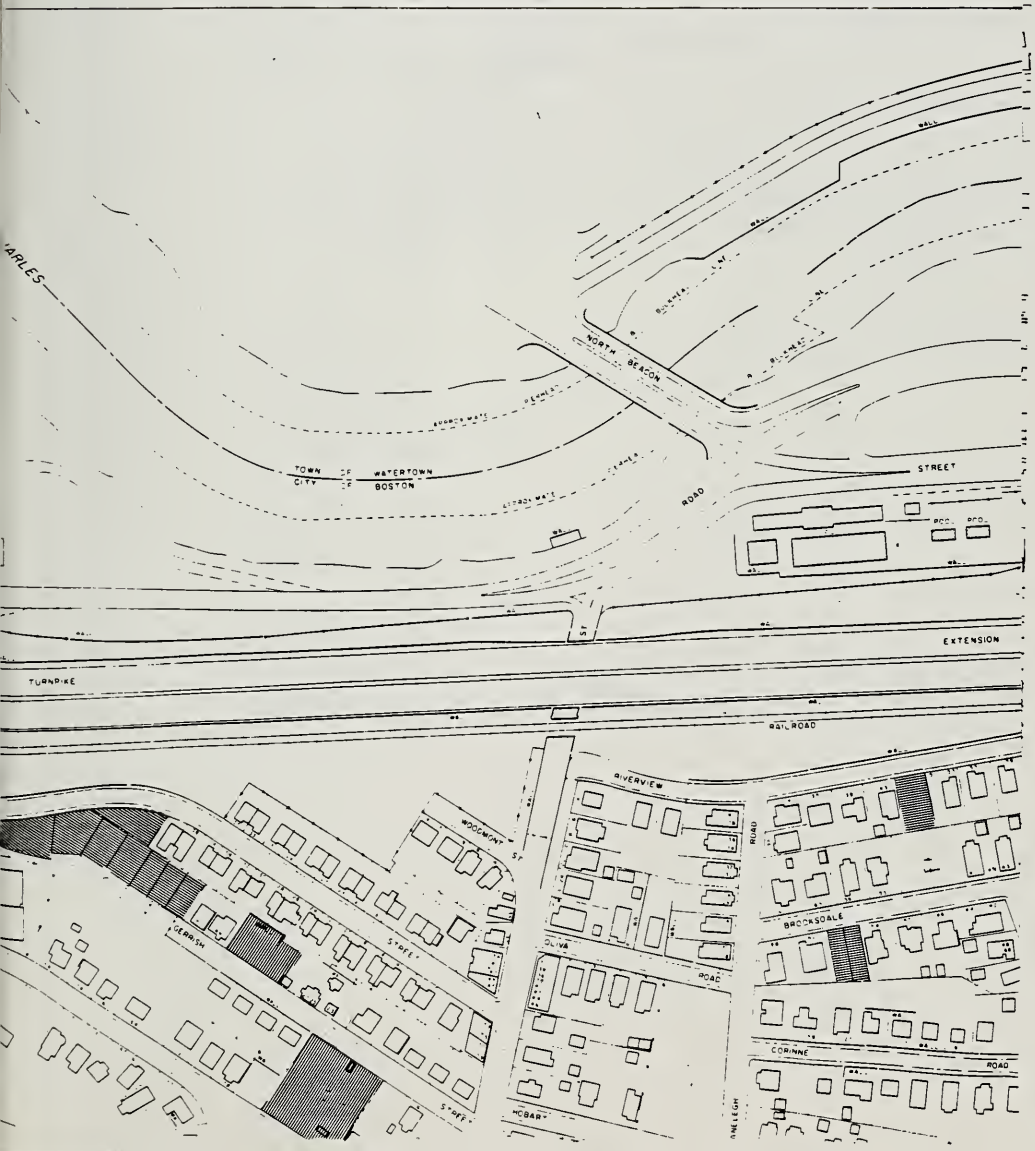
		26N—6E
24N—2E	24N—4E	24N—6E
22N—2E	22N—4E	22N—6E

DONNYBROOK
NEWCASTLE
BOTHWELL
ROAD
STREET
ARLINGTON
BENNETT
OAKLAND
HESTER
BEECHCROFT
BROCK
TURNER
FAIRBANKS
OAK SQUARE
AVENUE
MONTEREY
BRACKLEY
UPCREST
BROOKS
HOBSON
GUNBOY
DUNLAND
COURT
ROAD

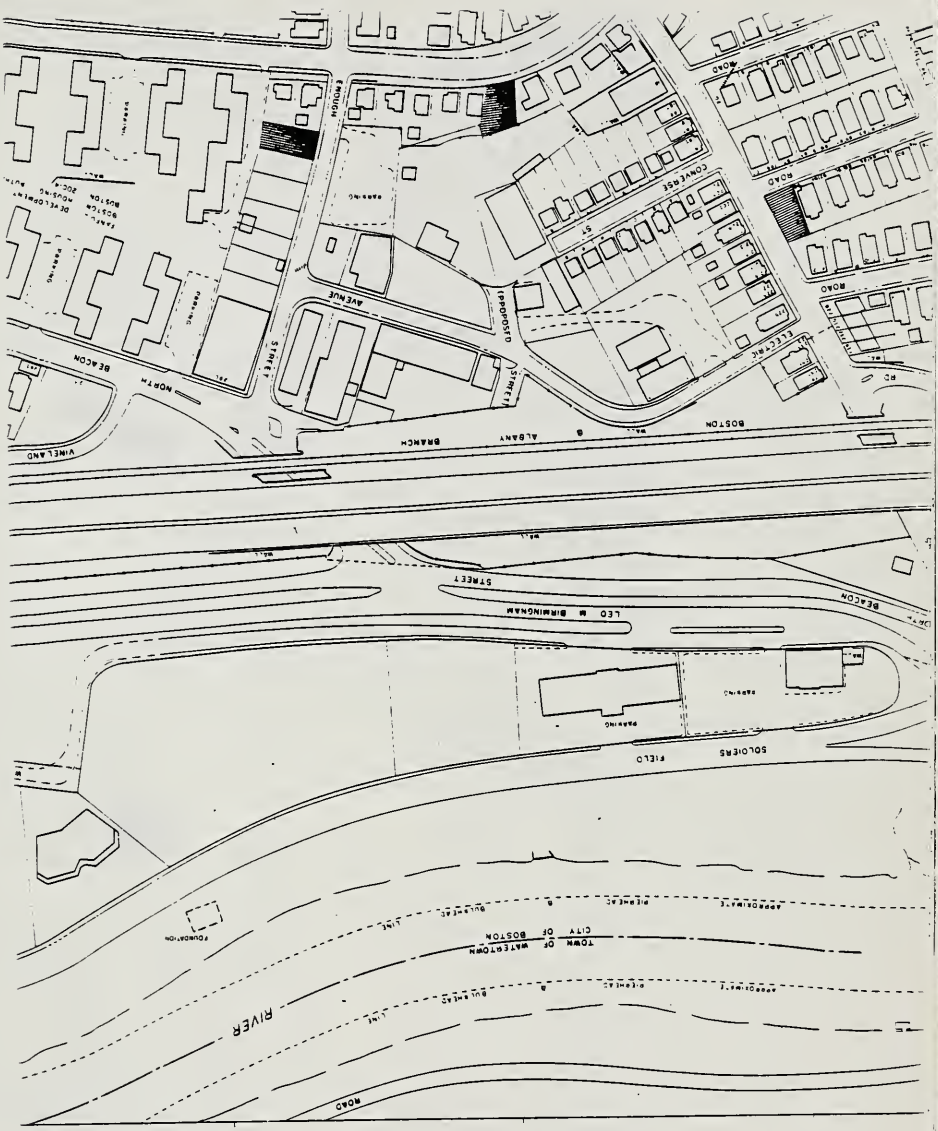
24N4

CITY OF

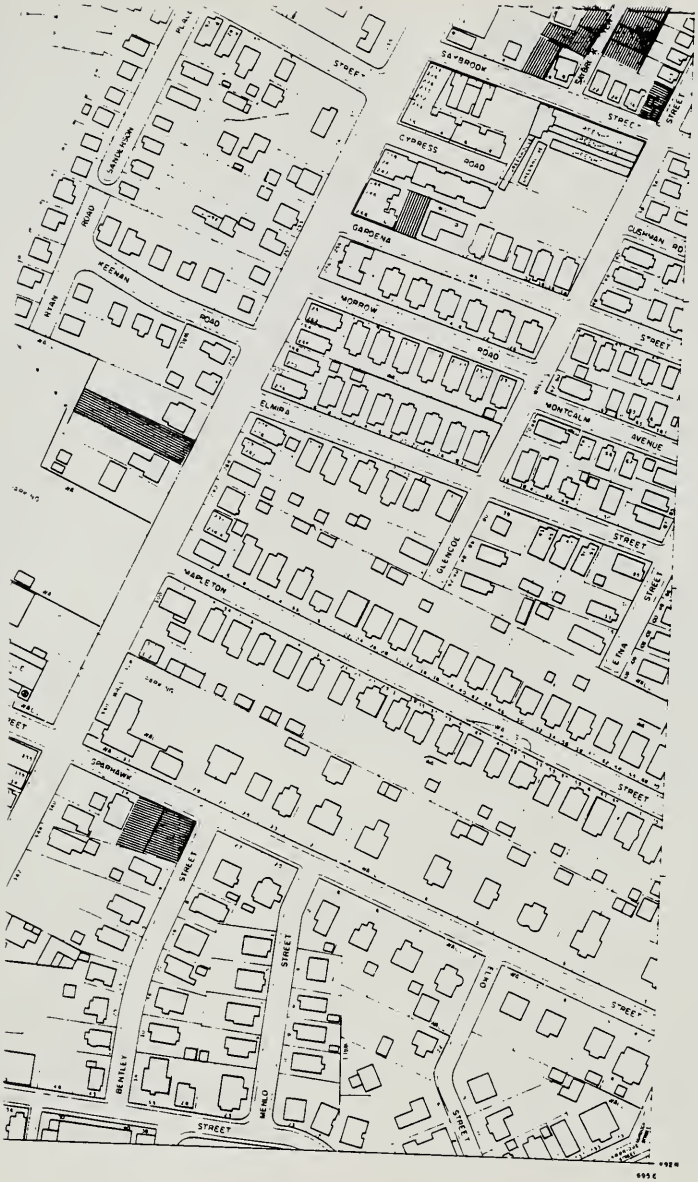
TOPOGRAPHIC AND



24N4


ALBANY
BRANCH
BOSTON
VINELAND
NORTH
BEACON
STREET
AVE HUE
CONVENT
ROAD
LEO B BIRMINGHAM
SOLDIERS
FIELD
RIVER
TOWN OF WATERTOWN
CITY OF BOSTON
PARKING

24N4



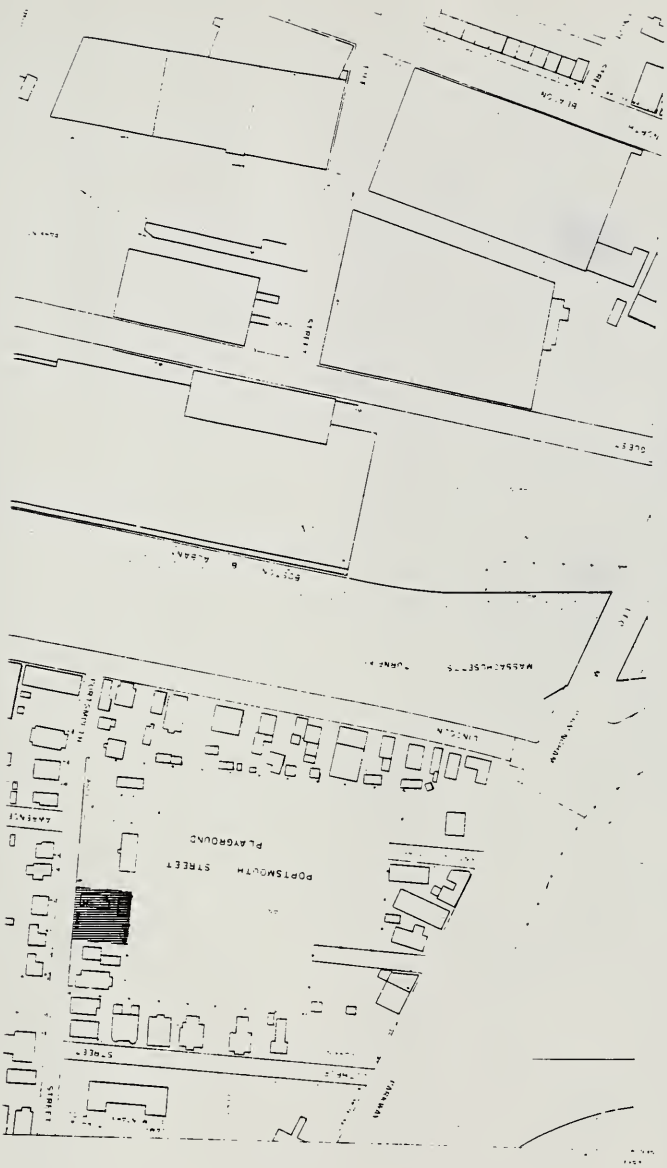
400 800 FT

		26N—6E
24N—2E	24N—4E	24N—6E
22N—2E	22N—4E	22N—6E

24N4

MC. KINNEY
PLAYGROUND
MILES
STREET
HARRIET
STREET
MACKLINE
ROAD
DUNKLEE
STREET
STREET
STREET
BANKER
STREET
FOLVIEW
STREET
STREET
STREET
STREET
SOUTH HOBART
STREET
SURREY
STREET
FOSTER
STREET
EGAN
WAY
PARSONS
LEICESTER
STREET
STREET
MARKET
HENSHA

24N4



400 300 FT

	26N—6E	26N—8E
24N—4E	24N—6E	24N—8E
22N—4E	22N—6E	22N—8E

24N6

2496

CITY OF
OPNGRAPHIC AND

24N6

STANLEY A RINGER
PLAYGROUND
COLON STREET
STREET
GORDON
STREET

24N6

STREET
NORTH WESTWARD
OXFORD
ROAD
MARKET
ARBOR
HOOKER
EMPIRE
HOPEDALE
ENTONIA
RAILROAD
BOSTON & ALBANY
EXTENSION
MASSACHUSETTS TURNPIKE
ALBANY

NORTH HARVARD ROAD
OXFORD STREET
STREET
EATONIA
HOPEDALE
STREET
MASKELL
STREET
STREET
STREET
HOOKER
STREET
EMPIRE
RAILROAD
BOSTON & ALBANY
EXTENSION
RAILROAD

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